With nursing homes closed to visitors, last goodbyes can be lost

Surreal, unintended repercussion of virus: Can't visit dying father in hospice

Joanne Kimberlin

By Joanne Kimberlin
Staff writer

My dad is dying. But he's still too alive for us to be allowed to come see him.

Long-term care facilities — he lives in one on the Peninsula — closed statewide this week to visitors, an effort to protect their exceptionally vulnerable populations for as long as the coronavirus threat lasts.

Exceptions are being made for "end of life" situations. My father's case, like untold others, doesn't quite qualify. He's 86 and under hospice care, but isn't considered to be "actively dying" — the required stage for visitors to be let in.

Actively dying, hospice has explained, generally means "unresponsive."

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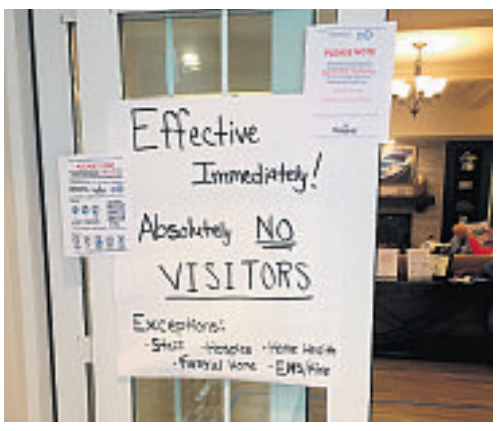

JOANNE KIMBERLIN/STAFF

Signs like this — posted on an assisted living facility on the Peninsula — went up across the state as long-term care facilities went on lockdown to protect residents from coronavirus.

Calls growing for Dem hopeful Bernie Sanders to exit race

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The Virginian-Pilot

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STEPHEN M. KATZ/STAFF

Health care providers with Sentara Princess Anne Hospital operate a drive-thru testing station for patients on Monday. A Harvard analysis of hospitals around the nation shows those in Hampton Roads likely will struggle to keep up with the flow of patients.

Overwhelming possibility

Data: coronavirus could create a staggering strain on hospitals in Hampton Roads — even in a best-case scenario

By Peter Coutu
Staff writer

Hampton Roads hospitals could be overwhelmed by an influx of coronavirus patients as the outbreak continues to spread — even in best-case scenarios, according to new data from the Harvard Global Health Institute.

State health officials announced Wednesday that 77 people have tested positive for COVID-19 throughout Virginia, with the tally quickly rising since the first case was reported March 7. And these numbers are expected to swell in the coming weeks, as they have in other states. Washington state, for example, went from 39 confirmed cases to more than 1,000 in about two weeks.

Even under the researcher's most favorable estimates — 20% infected — hospitals across Hampton Roads would struggle to keep up with the flow of patients, the Harvard analysis of hospitals around the nation shows. In this scenario, 265,238 adults would need to be hospitalized throughout the state.

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STEPHEN M. KATZ/STAFF

With a diminished supply, drive-thru coronavirus screening ended early Wednesday afternoon at Sentara Princess Anne Hospital in Virginia Beach.

IN SOUTH HAMPTON ROADS

If 20% of people got infected, it would require 360% of available beds over 6 months or 117% over 18 months, according to the Harvard Global Health Institute.

State up to 77 cases; Norfolk has its first

By Marie Albiges and Robyn Sidersky
Staff writers

RICHMOND — There have been 77 cases of the coronavirus identified in Virginia, a top state health official said Wednesday morning.

The numbers include three "outbreaks," one of 13 people in James City County and two others in the Richmond area, said Dr. Norm Oliver, the deputy commissioner for population health for the Virginia Department of Health. An outbreak is two or more cases that can be traced to common

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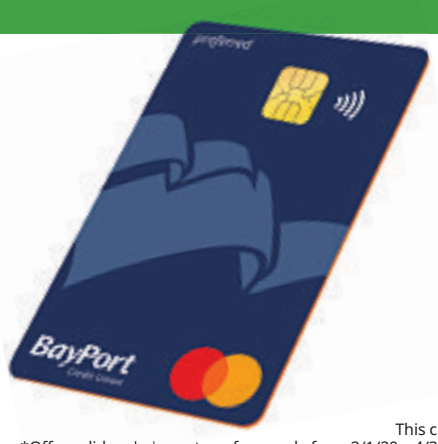

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